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By: **Delegates Mandel, Bartlett, Bozman, Conroy, Conway, Costa, Feldman, Frush, Glassman, Harrison, Haynes, Heller, Hixson, Jameson, Jennings, Krebs, Krysiak, Love, Malone, McHale, Moe, Parrott, Quinter, Stern, Stull, Taylor, Vaughn, Walkup, and Weir**

Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2004

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Task Force on Automatic Sprinkler Systems in Homes**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force to study requiring the installation of  
4 sprinkler systems in all newly constructed one- and two-family residential  
5 dwellings; providing for the membership and duties of the Task Force; providing  
6 for the appointment of a chairperson of the Task Force; providing for staffing of  
7 the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain  
8 compensation; authorizing a member of the Task Force to receive  
9 reimbursement for certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to submit a  
10 preliminary report to the Economic Matters Committee of the House of  
11 Delegates and the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee of  
12 the Senate of Maryland by a certain date; requiring the Task Force to report to  
13 the Economic Matters Committee of the House of Delegates and the Education,  
14 Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate of Maryland by a  
15 certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to  
16 the establishment of a Task Force to study requiring the installation of sprinkler  
17 systems.

18 Preamble

19 WHEREAS, Since 1975, fires have killed an average of 115 people in Maryland  
20 each year, including 74 in 2002; and

21 WHEREAS, Over 80% of all fatal fires occur in residential properties where  
22 people feel the safest; and

23 WHEREAS, Fatal fires in the home target the vulnerable and the unaware,  
24 disproportionately killing children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities and  
25 killing more often during common sleeping hours between midnight and 8 a.m.; and

26 WHEREAS, The Residential Fire Safety Institute estimates that the  
27 combination of a working smoke alarm and a functional automatic fire sprinkler  
28 system can improve the chance of survival by 97%; and

1 WHEREAS, Since requiring the installation of automatic sprinkler systems in  
2 all new one- and two-family dwellings in 1992, Prince George's County has suffered  
3 41 deaths in homes without sprinklers but none in homes with sprinklers; and

4 WHEREAS, Automatic sprinkler systems can contain and may extinguish a fire  
5 in less time than it takes for the fire department to arrive on the scene; and

6 WHEREAS, Fires damage over \$17,000 worth of property in each home in which  
7 they occur, for a total of over \$5 billion in damage nationwide in 2002; and

8 WHEREAS, Fire-damaged homes equipped with automatic sprinkler systems  
9 suffered an average loss of less than \$2,000; and

10 WHEREAS, In residential occupancies, automatic sprinkler systems contain  
11 90% of the fires encountered by operating just one sprinkler and by using only about  
12 200 gallons of water, as opposed to the more than 3,000 gallons used by firefighters  
13 against the average fire, thus limiting water damage as well as damage caused by fire  
14 and smoke; and

15 WHEREAS, The presence of automatic sprinkler systems also greatly reduces  
16 risks to firefighters, who perish in the line of duty at the rate of almost 100 per year  
17 nationwide; and

18 WHEREAS, Residential automatic sprinkler systems are already required  
19 statewide in all newly constructed dormitories, hotels, apartment buildings, and town  
20 homes; and

21 WHEREAS, Most local jurisdictions in the State do not require the installation  
22 of automatic sprinkler systems in new one- and two-family dwellings; now, therefore,

23 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
24 MARYLAND, That:

25 (a) There is a Task Force to study requiring the installation of automatic  
26 sprinkler systems in all newly constructed one- or two-family residential dwellings  
27 in the State.

28 (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

29 (1) one member of the House of Delegates from Allegany, Calvert,  
30 Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Kent,  
31 Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, or Worcester  
32 County, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

33 (2) one member of the House of Delegates from Anne Arundel,  
34 Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, or Prince George's County or from Baltimore City,  
35 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

36 (3) one member of the Senate of Maryland from Allegany, Calvert,  
37 Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Kent,

1 Queen Anne's, Somerset, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, Wicomico, or Worcester  
2 County, appointed by the President of the Senate;

3 (4) one member of the Senate of Maryland from Anne Arundel,  
4 Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, or Prince George's County or from Baltimore City,  
5 appointed by the President of the Senate;

6 (5) the State Fire Marshal, or the State Fire Marshal's designee;

7 (6) the Director of the Building Codes Administration of the Department  
8 of Housing and Community Development, or the Director's designee;

9 (7) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's  
10 designee;

11 (8) the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, or the Chairman's  
12 designee;

13 (9) the Commissioner of the Maryland Insurance Administration, or the  
14 Commissioner's designee;

15 (10) the following members, appointed jointly by the President of the  
16 Senate and the Speaker of the House:

17 (i) a representative of the Maryland Municipal League;

18 (ii) a representative of the Maryland Association of Counties;

19 (iii) a representative of the Maryland State Firemen's Association,  
20 or a similar organization of volunteer firefighters;

21 (iv) a representative of the Professional Firefighters of Maryland, or  
22 a similar organization of professional firefighters;

23 (v) a representative of the Maryland State Builders Association, or  
24 a similar organization of builders and building contractors;

25 (vi) a representative of the National Fire Sprinkler Association, or a  
26 similar organization of sprinkler manufacturers and installers; and

27 (vii) a representative of Maryland Plumbing, Heating & Cooling  
28 Contractors, or a similar organization of plumbers and plumbing contractors.

29 (c) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House jointly shall  
30 appoint the chairperson from among the members of the Task Force.

31 (d) The Task Force shall make specific recommendations, including  
32 developing draft legislation and regulations, on requiring the installation of sprinkler  
33 systems in all new one- and two-family dwellings in the State.

1 (e) The Department of Legislative Services shall provide staffing for the Task  
2 Force.

3 (f) A member of the Task Force may not receive compensation for serving on  
4 the Task Force but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard  
5 State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

6 (g) The Task Force shall present a preliminary report to the Economic Matters  
7 Committee of the House of Delegates and the Education, Health, and Environmental  
8 Affairs Committee of the Senate of Maryland no later than October 1, 2004.

9 (h) The Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
10 Economic Matters Committee of the House of Delegates and the Education, Health,  
11 and Environmental Affairs Committee of the Senate of Maryland no later than  
12 December 1, 2004.

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
14 June 1, 2004. It shall remain effective for a period of 7 months and, at the end of  
15 December 31, 2004, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act  
16 shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.